

IDAHO STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
News & Reports (USPS 940120)
Len B. Jordan Building
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, Idaho 83720-0027

TO:

"News & Reports" (ISSN 1049-2437) is published quarterly by the State Department of Education, Office of Administration, 650 W. State St., Boise ID 83702. Free to all subscribers by the State Department of Education. Periodical class postage paid at Boise, ID.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to "News and Reports," State Department of Education. Office of Administration, P.O. Box 83720, Boise, ID 83720-0027. Mail to:

Editor: Allison L. Westfall
State Superintendent of Public Instruction:
Dr. Marilyn Howard

"News & Reports" is published in partial fulfillment of federal requirements for the dissemination of information and activities under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.



STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SPRING 2005 VOL. 33, NO. 1, BOISE, ID

NEWS & REPORTS

www.sde.state.id.us/dept

A message from the state superintendent

Share your stories of collaboration

During April's post legislative tour, I expressed my concern to district superintendents as to how administrators and teachers can maintain the enthusiasm and energy our work requires when rampant criticisms, threats, and demands are draining the joy from teaching for so many of our cohorts.

This was not a good year for teachers in the Idaho Legislature. Putting our educators last in line for even the possibility of a less than 1 percent bonus was demeaning. Refusing for the fourth year in a row to provide any money to districts to compensate career teachers devalued those who have spent more than 13 years building the skills to be true professionals.

Criticizing and zero funding a mentoring plan for beginning teachers and asking districts to choose between adequate technology to meet required tests and remedial support for kids who aren't passing the tests amplified our awareness of the disdain that too many legislators feel for public education and their yearly irritation of being asked to fund it.

Are you, along with your fellow educators, ready to work together to improve your services, provide mentoring to new teachers and additional learning opportunities for all students and, along the way, enlarge the confidence and pride your community feels for its public schools?

Do you have time to do that? Do you want to do that?

Already you are part of school committees, attending IEP team meetings, and using the moments before and hours after school for lesson planning and review and grading of student work. Some of you find that every moment of the day, except for a 20-minute lunch break, is scheduled for indoor or outdoor supervision of students.

Others are in situations where



Dr. Marilyn Howard
Superintendent of Public Instruction

there is time, within the school day, when supervisory or tutorial duties are taken over by others and grade level or content area meetings can be held. There are districts that have moved to a four-day student week, reserving the fifth day for teachers to plan and prepare. Some districts have an early release once a week to allow the concentration of time needed for district and building goals to be met.

Whatever the format, these are districts with schedules that allow teaching professionals the R & D time needed to meet the challenges of today.

But, will teachers and administrators be willing to work in more collaborative and risk-taking ways to improve what they do, using some of the time made available for this purpose? Or will the response be: I know what I'm doing. I need more time but don't bother me with meet-

Inside this issue

On Page 1 -- The Twin Falls and Coeur d'Alene districts offer programs to prevent drop outs and help at risk students succeed.

On Page 1 -- The Idaho Digital Learning Academy expands remedial and advanced offerings starting in the fall.

On Page 2 -- The State Department of Education's Child Nutrition Program has several new staff members.

On Page 2 -- Several teachers receive state and national awards.

On Page 3 -- Idaho moves forward with new test for English language learners.

On Page 3 -- The third Indian Education Summit is set for October.

On Page 3 -- A variety of workshops and events of interest to educators are planned for this summer and next fall.

ings.

Where are the schools that are working already in effective and exhilarating professional collaboration to help students learn and to love learning? Where are the schools where staff would like to do so, but are not quite sure how to make it happen?

Write to me at mhoward@sde.state.id.us I want to know about you. My staff and I are working on ways to be of service to you.

In this last issue for school year 2004-05, I want to close by telling you how much I appreciate your work to benefit Idaho's children. I hope your resolve to meet the challenges our profession provides has not wavered.

And, on behalf of Idaho's children, I thank you.

Mandates create opportunities for outreach

By Allison Westfall
State Department of Education

Don't let mandates or requirements prevent your school or district from taking advantage of one of the most positive aspects of the federal No Child Behind Act: notifications to parents.

NCLB requires districts and local education agencies (LEAs) to produce a variety of notifications and reports, many on an annual basis.

Opportunities

Various activities and events trigger mandated notifications or opportunities, including:

Got a school in improvement? Tell parents about it in a letter.

Got assessment and progress results? Report them to parents and the public in report cards.

Got teachers? Let the parents and public know if they are highly qualified.

Got school safety data? Make it available to the public.

And so on. It would be easy to view these requirements as onerous paperwork, especially in light of the amount of required details, but educators should see them as tools to reach out to communities with information about schools.

Tools

The State Department of Education produces templates for school report cards and letters about choice and work

What's required

Below are some of the notifications required of school districts and local education agencies (LEA) by the federal No Child Left Behind Act:

****Inform parents about schools identified for improvement and options such as transfer or tutoring available to children.**

****Inform parents when the district (LEA) is identified for improvement.**

****Ensure that annual "report cards" for schools and the district are produced and disseminated.**

****Notify parents that they can request information about the qualifications of their child's teacher.**

is under way on supplemental services notifications.

These templates are intended as a starting point to help educators as they meet these requirements. It is our hope that these will spark the creation of a customized letter, report card, or notice that provides meaningful information to parents about what's happening in your schools or districts.

Parent guide

The department also was pleased to work with the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation on its 3rd edition

of its Idaho Parent Resource, which provides information on No Child Left Behind.

The publication will be a great tool for schools in explaining the complex and sometime confusing parts of NCLB. It also includes a special pullout section explaining how to use the school's report card.

The guide is available to schools in both English and Spanish and can be ordered by calling the Foundation at (208) 424-2600.

Federal review

Notifications can provide great opportunities to engage parents, but schools and districts should remember they are required.

U.S. Department of Education staff this spring reviewed Idaho's efforts to implement the No Child Left Behind Act. They visited the department and three districts, and contacted other districts by telephone.

One of the issues that came up was ensuring that the required notifications to parents and the public are occurring. It's no surprise that this part of the law would be highlighted as required notifications are embedded throughout, from school, district and state report cards to letters about the qualifications of teachers. As districts decide how to best use these opportunities, they should also remember to document their efforts.

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION - Federal law prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status in any educational programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance. (Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.) It is the policy of the Idaho

State Department of Education not to discriminate in any educational programs or activities or in employment practices. Inquiries regarding compliance with this nondiscriminatory policy may be directed to State Superintendent of Public Instruction, P.O. Box 83720, Boise, Idaho 83720-0027, (208) 332-6800, or to the Director, Office of Civil Rights, Seattle Office, U.S. Department of Education, 915 Second Avenue, Seattle, WA 98174-1009, (206) 220-7800; FAX (206) 220-7887.



NEWS & REPORTS

www.sde.state.id.us/dept/

HIGH SCHOOLS

Secondary schools in spotlight

Graduation rates added to school progress reports

When accountability reports are released in August, they will for the first time record whether schools and districts are making progress toward the state's graduation or completion rate goal.

The State Board of Education established a goal for schools and districts to reach a graduation rate of 90 percent by the 2012-13 school year. Currently, Idaho's rate is 80 percent.

The federal No Child Left Behind Act requires states to set a goal and monitor efforts to reach that goal through Adequate Yearly Progress.

The State Department of Education has reported graduation and drop out rate information on its web-based district report cards for the past three years.

This past spring, school district staff were reviewing drop out and graduate information to ensure its accuracy. More information is posted at:

<http://www.sde.state.id.us/dept/administrators.asp>



Tom Owens of the Twin Falls School District reviews the district's drop-out prevention program with the State Board of Education earlier this school year.

Coeur d'Alene finds success with locally funded remedial programs

By Taryn Brodwater
Idaho Spokesman Review
Reprinted with permission

Bette Price will put up with the rolling eyes, the "I'm too cool for reading class" attitudes.

"So many students say, 'I hate coming to a dumb reading class,'" the Coeur d'Alene High reading teacher said.

By the end of semester, Price said, some of last year's reading students experienced a change of heart. When school opened this fall, some actually visited Price's classroom to chat about books they had read over the summer. Some told her they finished a novel for the first time in years.

"That's music to my ears," Price said.

Reading classes were started at both high schools in the Coeur d'Alene district last year to help students who weren't reaching statewide goals on the Idaho Standards Achievement Test. Students must pass the ISAT to graduate, and schools and districts can be sanctioned if students don't perform well.

The federal government has said every student must achieve proficiency on the state tests in reading, math and language by 2014 (the state's goal is by 2013).

To help Coeur d'Alene students reach that goal, the district last year implemented several remediation programs, from all-day kindergarten in the elementary schools to "School Within a

School" programs at the middle and high schools. Each program was designed to bring the district's most at-risk and struggling students up to speed.

The results from the first year of remediation programs are in and Coeur d'Alene educators are hailing the effort as a success. Taxpayers funded the program through a \$10.1 million levy passed in 2003.

About \$1.6 million was earmarked for remediation.

Rosie Astorquia, the district's curriculum director, said the results of the remediation programs were "unbelievable."

"Each group had some really amazing things happening," she said.

Not a single student in Price's class - or the class at Lake City High - was reading at grade level at the beginning of last school year. By semester's end, 74 percent of those high school students were reading at a "proficient" level, according to ISAT scores.

The earliest intervention, extended-day kindergarten, was set up to serve 60 students at four elementary sites. Not a single student entered the program as a proficient reader. At year's end, 86 percent were reading at grade level.

Students in junior high and high school who didn't score proficient on the ISAT were placed in mandatory ISAT remediation classes.

Continued on Page 2

Twin Falls focuses on preventing drop outs

Two years ago, when Twin Falls School District administrators and trustees reviewed their data on high school dropouts it showed a story no one wanted to read.

More than 20 percent of sophomores enrolled at Twin Falls High School did not graduate with their class.

During the course of the past three years, an average of 123 students per year dropped out.

During a typical school year, every week three students dropped out of school.

The news was more disturbing when officials realized that the numbers only reflected the students who quit the educational setting before graduating and did not include students who moved, transferred, pursued home schooling, joined Job Corps, or went on to earn a GED.

Even though the district had noticed a decrease in the dropout rate over a four-year time period, the numbers were still troubling to district officials who believed that the school improvement process was making a difference in providing a quality education to all students, said LaVonne Peterson, Curriculum Director for the district.

In the summer of 2003, based on the premise that the dropout numbers were simply unacceptable, the district embarked on a plan to reduce the dropout rate. After that first year, early results showed that the efforts were making a difference, as the district saw its dropout rate reduced by 23 percent, going from a high of 132 in 2002-2003 to 90 for 2003-2004.

Getting started

Preventing students from dropping out is difficult work, as students don't just come to school one day and decide to drop out. Factors that lead to a student's decision to leave school are complex and well documented, and part of the challenge includes helping students, staff, and the public understand the personal, educational, and economic impacts school dropouts have on a community.

Continued on Page 2

Department launches new teams

Approach links efforts across state, federal programs

Changing expectations for Idaho schools and students has led the State Department of Education to change how it does business.

In January, Superintendent of Public Instruction Marilyn Howard announced updated mission and vision statements and new goals for the department.

The changes were the result of a strategic planning effort launched last summer.

"So much has changed in education during the past seven years," Howard said. "It was time for the department to look at how it could adapt to better serve districts and schools."

New teams

Howard also created six new teams to work on department goals.

The teams are:

- Accountability and School Improvement
- Assessment and Data Analysis
- Educator Quality and Leadership
- Improving Student Achievement
- Organizational Improvement
- Partnerships, Networks and Innovation.

Educators likely won't see the influence of the teams directly.

"What our stakeholders should expect to see the teams create is consistency across programs and bureaus," said Jana Jones, deputy superintendent.

The department still maintains its basic structure with bureaus for teacher certification, finance, special populations, administration, and curriculum.

The teams will consist of employees from the various bureaus who will work on shared tasks such as school improvement.

Recent retirements and staff changes have resulted in changes to leadership of the department's five bureaus.

Bureaus and their chiefs are:

Tom Farley, Curriculum and Accountability;

Mary Beth Flachbart, Special Populations;

Tim Hill, Support Services;

Rich Mincer, Technology Services;

Mike Stefanic, Certification, Professional Standards, and Adult Services.

On Page 2: New department staff changes.



Farley



Flachbart



Hill



Mincer



Stefanic

Nutrition program staff changes

The State Department of Education's child nutrition program has new leadership and staff members.

Colleen Fillmore is the new supervisor for the program, which provides services to schools, early childhood, and senior programs. Previously she was the leader of the National School Lunch Program for Idaho. Other staff and their primary area of assignment include:

Sally Bartlett, specialist, Child and Adult Care Food



Bartlett



Fillmore



Florence



Marshall



Martin



Ray



Westphal



Zaske

Program; AnnaMae Florence, specialist, Administrative Review and Training Program; Mary Jo Marshall, specialist, National School Lunch Program; Heidi Martin, specialist,

Team Nutrition Grant and the National School Lunch Program; Tammy Ray, specialist, Commodity Program and National School Lunch Program; Lynn Westphal, specialist, Simplified Summer Food Program; and Jean Zask, training specialist. The nutrition program also has changed bureaus within the department and is located under the Bureau of School Support. The nutrition program website is: <http://www.sde.state.id.us/child/>

Immunization requirements, reports changing

The immunization requirements for preschoolers and kindergarten students are changing for the 2005-06 school year. The change was approved by the 2005 Legislature and involves additional doses of the diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (DTaP) vaccine and the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine. Beginning with 2005-06, all children entering preschool and kindergarten will be required to have a minimum of:

5 doses of DTaP (change

from 4)
2 doses of MMR (change from 1)
3 doses of polio (no change)
3 doses of hepatitis B (no change).
Parents may also file for an exemption, citing a valid medical or religious reason. (An exemption is not valid if the parent has forgotten the child's immunization records.) State law requires a parent, custodian, or guardian of any child who is to attend any pub-

lic, private, or parochial school in Idaho to provide proof of required immunizations before attendance; children who are not in compliance must be excluded. New forms have been created for preschools and schools and are available at <http://iris.idhw.state.id.us>. For more information call 1 (208) 334-5931. Parents who need copies of immunization records can contact their child's physician or the health district where they lived when their child received the shots.

Briefs

Oravez joins certification bureau

C i n a Oravez joined the State Department of Education's Bureau of Certification/Professional Standards and Adult Services as a specialist. She will work primarily with the Professional Standards Commission.



Oravez

Wickliff joins department's veterans education program

P h i l Wickliff joined the State Department of Education as its supervisor of veteran's education programs. Before joining the department, he worked for the American Institute of Health Technology in Boise in the positions of financial aid director, financial director and instructor teaching law and ethics, anatomy and physiology, and general education courses. He also is a retired Naval Aviator.



Wickliff

Department assigned new deputy attorney general

Chris Kronberg is the new Deputy Attorney General assigned to the State Department of Education. Prior to joining the department, Kronberg was in private practice with the law offices of Bowen & Bailey, LLP in Boise.



From left: Kathy Graham, Krista Jones, and Vana Richards.

Science teachers recognized

Three outstanding science teachers were honored in October. Three teachers were named state finalists for the Presidential Award in Science: Kathy Graham, Sawtooth Elementary, Twin Falls; Krista Jones, Bellevue Elementary School, Blaine County School District; and Vana Richards, Carberry Intermediate School, Emmett School District. The presidential award finalists will receive a one year membership in the National Science Teachers Association.

Counselors receive state awards

The Idaho Association of School Counselors recognized outstanding counselors at its fall conference. Awards given include: Erinn Erickson from Robert Stuart Junior High, Twin Falls, "Junior High Counselor of the Year" Angela Hoops from Buhl High School, "High School Counselor of the Year," and Ardyce Buckmaster from North Junior High (Boise) as Counselor Advocate of the Year.

Foreign language teacher recognized

The Idaho Association for Teachers of Language and Culture honored its Teacher of the Year at its annual conference in October.

Borah High School teacher Susan Kluksdal was recognized. She teaches French at the Boise school.

CDA teacher receives national honor

Coeur d'Alene High School teacher Deanne Clifford received a national honor for work as a student council advisor. Clifford, who teaches honors Algebra II at Lake City High School, was named one of seven Warren E. Schull Advisors of the Year by the National Association of Student Councils in mid-April. Last fall, Clifford was named Idaho Advisor of the Year and the Lake City's student council was recognized as Idaho's Outstanding Student Council.

Twin Falls

Continued from Page 1

But even though the issue is difficult and complex, Twin Falls was determined to create a program to make dropout prevention a K-12, district wide priority. With the help of federal funding, a graduation/dropout prevention specialist was hired to lead the efforts. And, because the responsibility for reducing dropouts posed a challenge that stretched beyond school walls into the community, an advisory group of district personnel, parents, and community representatives was established to help with the efforts.

Using research from other successful programs, the group established fundamental program beliefs targeting specific needs:

- Early and sustained intervention
- Community support
- Alternative educational opportunities
- Parent involvement
- Stronger reading and writing programs
- Academic support
- Personalized intervention plans
- Connecting kids to school through extracurricular and co-curricular activities, and
- Prevention plans based on best practices.

Launching strategies

The graduation/dropout prevention specialist coordinated the efforts already in place with the committee's work. The resulting prevention strategies included:

- Increasing student, parent, and community awareness of the problems associated with student dropouts
- Developing screening tools to help identify students who were

at-risk

- Strengthening the district's reading and writing programs
- Providing options for credit deficient students through credit retrieval and alternative programs, and
- Elevating student expectations by promoting post-secondary education expectations for all students.

The committee also began developing a list of adult mentors; creating a reference support network to increase parent involvement and reach minority parents; and establishing a student assistance fund to provide financial assistance for enrollment, tuition, or other expenses. Because the needs of students who are at risk of dropping out often go beyond academic issues, accountability boards and behavior assessment teams were created.

And Peterson said when all else failed, staff members would conduct exit interviews and use the data as a support for refocusing efforts and resources.

During the checkout process, parents and students are required to sign a checklist that includes information on unemployment statistics, suspension of driving privileges, and GED requirements.

The district continues to adapt the program to meet new challenges, and officials are hopeful that the efforts will continue to keep more students in school. But they also note that schools cannot address the problem alone.

"While we recognize the importance of what district staff can and should do, realistically, without parental and community involvement and support, our effectiveness is limited," Peterson said.

Coeur d'Alene

Continued from Page 1

Extra teachers were hired to start School Within a School programs at the district's middle and high schools. Students were placed in smaller classes and stayed in those classes for half of each day.

The students ate breakfast together, took math and language arts together and learned study skills.

Middle school students were selected for School Within a School based on grade-point averages. Over the course of a year, the students raised their cumulative GPA from a D average to C-plus, Astorquia said.

The 40 most at-risk freshmen at each high school also were put in School Within a School.

"Of 80 kids in that program, only two dropped out during the course of the school year," Superintendent Harry Amend said. "With that group of freshmen, in past years, over half would have dropped out."

The high school students in School Within a School also raised their grade point averages an entire point, he said.

"Not only were they staying," Amend said, "they were succeeding."

Astorquia said discipline referrals were reduced as much as 60 percent among the high school students in the program. The levy funds also allowed the district to offer free summer school.

Scores increased from spring to fall for students in the summer school program, Astorquia said.

"Usually you find a bit of a drop over the summer," she said.

"Our goal had been just to keep those kids stable, but we did see gains. Not drastic, but pretty steady gains."

The district also added the Bridge Academy dropout retrieval school.

The school allowed students who dropped out to return and earn credits one at a time on a flexible schedule by taking computer-based classes.

Fifty-seven students who had previously dropped out of school received a diploma last year through the Bridge Academy.

Almost all of the remediation programs allow students to move in or out based on need. Some students spend an entire year in extended-day kindergarten, for example.

Barb Sinsley has about eight kindergarten students in the extended-day program at Borah Elementary. Most start school only able to identify a handful of the letters in the alphabet.

In the afternoon, Sinsley works to reinforce the lessons students learn in the morning. They get extra one-on-one help with reading and writing their name.

Last year, every one of the students in Sinsley's class finished the year reading at grade level.

"We saw tremendous growth," Sinsley said. "It really makes a difference."

After this year, Astorquia said the district will re-evaluate the remediation programs and may ask taxpayers to continue their support.

"Our hope is that in 10 years we will need a much smaller scale of remediation because we've caught kids early," she said.

BRIEFS

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Conference focuses on individual rights

Idaho Attorney General Lawrence Wasden will keynote an institute for teachers and attorneys in June.



Wasden

"Individual Rights in a Changing World: Where Have We Been? Where are We Now?" will be held June 15-17 at the Doubletree Riverside, Boise.

Conference topics will include federalism, water rights in Idaho, Native American sovereignty, judicial review and the role of courts in society, and more.

The institute is sponsored by the Idaho Law Foundation in partnership with the Idaho Department of Education.

Financial aid (including travel stipends) is available.

For more information contact Becky Jensen at bjensen@isb.idaho.gov or (208) 334-4500.

Indian Education Summit Oct. 6-7

The third annual Indian Education Summit will be at the Coeur d'Alene Casino/Hotel in Worley Oct. 6 and 7.

The summit is sponsored by the State Indian Education Committee, which is part of the Idaho State Department of Education's efforts to enhance Indian education in the state of Idaho. Other collaborative sponsors include the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, North Idaho College, University of Idaho, Lewis Clark State College, Boise State University, and Idaho State University.

The theme for the Conference is "Three big 'C's' for Educating Native American Children -- Caring, Commitment, and Communication."

For more information contact Dr. Chris Meyer, principal, or Bob Sobotta, superintendent of Coeur d'Alene Tribal School, at 1 (208) 686- 5808.

The conference is for all educators and/or parents that are interested in Indian education. Native American teachers and teachers of Native American students from throughout the Northwest will attend.

Speakers will include but not be limited to: Dr. Annemieke Golly, University of Oregon; Dr. George Canney, University of Idaho; Bill Hayne, Lewis Clark State College; Tom Kellogg, Autrey Foundation from Los Angeles; Dr. Antoinette Cavannaugh, Elko County School Superintendent; and others.

History, social science conference set for fall

"When Worlds Collide: Worlds Together, Worlds Apart" is the theme of the October in-service history and social sciences conference Oct. 6-7 in Boise.

Keynote speakers include Allan Lichtman, John Kaminski, and Keith Allred. Topics include women in history, world history, elementary grade level content, United States history, economics, geography, politics, and the humanities.

Lee Arbetman, author of "Street Law," will make a special appearance for law and government teachers, and a designated strand for Teaching American History Grant participants will span both conference days.

The event's annual Fettuccine Forum will include a panel discussing "Red States, Blue States -- Who are We?"

The Preserve America History Teacher of the Year Award will be presented on Thursday, Oct. 6. A special, hosted reception for Idaho's History Teacher of the Year and conference speakers will be held at the Idaho Basque History Museum and Cultural Center Thursday afternoon and is included in the cost of registration.

Conference speakers and presenters will represent Boise State University, Northwest Nazarene University, Idaho State University, Albertson College of Idaho, the Idaho Humanities Council, the Idaho Council for the Social Studies, the Law Related Education Program of the Idaho Law Foundation, Inc., Junior Achievement of Idaho, the Idaho Council on Economic Education, and numerous public and private schools.

This year's partnerships include the Idaho Council for the Social Studies and the Center for School Improvement and Policy Studies at Boise State University.

Conference registration includes continental breakfasts, hot lunches, a hosted reception, classroom materials, and many other benefits. Participants may register onsite for university credit.

The conference is sponsored by the Idaho Council for History Education (ICHE), which has received national attention and commendation by the National Council for History Education for the quality of ICHE conferences.

For more information contact Linda Barker at Linda.Barker@Boiseschools.org or call (208) 287-2171.

Assessment under development for limited English students

By Eric Muhr
for News & Reports

Federal No Child Left Behind legislation requires that all students reach state standards in reading, science and math. But not all children come to school equally prepared to learn. In 1997, for instance, Idaho's schools served more than 11,000 students who could not speak English fluently. Only eight years later, that number has grown to 20,816.

But it's not just the number of students who don't speak English that is growing. They are becoming more culturally diverse each year as well.

Ann Farris, federal program

supervisor for the Boise School District, said that more than 80 different languages are spoken by children in Boise schools.

Wendy Verity, Limited English Proficiency program manager for the State Board of Education, said these students often fail to meet required state standards.

"They're not passing the test in English because they don't understand English,"



Farris

JUNE

June 13-17

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory K-2 Workshop (Understanding children's mathematical thinking), Moscow. For information contact Claire Gates at 1 (503) 275-9173 or 1 (800) 547-6339 or gatesc@nwrel.org.

June 16-17

School Leaders' Summit, Idaho Association of School Administrators, Coeur d'Alene Inn, Coeur d'Alene. For information, visit: http://www.idschadm.org/PDFs/IASA_AM.pdf or contact the IASA at (208) 345-1171.

State Board of Education meeting, University of Idaho, Moscow. More information is available at: <http://www.boardofed.idaho.gov/calendar.asp>

June 20-23

Lewis and Clark State College 2nd Annual Summer Institute for Effective Teaching of American Indian Students. For information contact Bill Hayne, (208) 792-2080 or Lisa Guzman, (208) 792-2743, email: imguzman@lcsc.edu

June 21-22

Paraprofessional Supervision Academy (PSA). College of Southern Idaho, Twin Falls. For information contact Tracey Meyerhoeffer, Director of The Paraeducator Center, at tmeyerhoeffer@csi.edu or 1-800-680-0274, X6874

June 26-30

ArtsPowered Schools Summer Institute, Albertson College of Idaho, Caldwell. For information visit <http://www.artspoweredschools.idaho.gov> or contact Ruth Pisanen, Idaho Commission on the Arts at 334-2119, email: rpiisanen@arts.idaho.gov or Peggy Wenner at the State Department of Education at 332-6949, email: pwenner@sde.state.id.us.

June 28-29

Training of Paraprofessional Academy (TOPA), College of Southern Idaho, Twin Falls. For information contact Tracey Meyerhoeffer, Director of The Paraeducator Center, at tmeyerhoeffer@csi.edu or 1-800-680-0274, X6874

JULY

July 17-23

The Idaho Humanities Council's Interdisciplinary Summer Institute for Idaho Teachers: Nothing but the Truth: Survival and Celebration in Native American Literature. Albertson College, Caldwell. For information contact the Idaho Humanities Council at (888) 345-5346 or visit <http://www.idahohumanities.org>.

July 23

Edufest 2005 Parent Day, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Boise State University Student Union Building, Boise. For information, contact Maxine Klossner at (208) 332-6913.

July 24-29

ISTEP Elementary (Number Sense and Algebra: Manipulative, Technology, and Application), McCall. For more information contact Bob Firman at 1 (208) 377-1580 or firmanbw@msn.com.

July 24-29

ISTEP High School (Number Sense and Algebra: Manipulative, Technology, and Application), McCall. For more information contact Bob Firman at 1 (208) 377-1580 or firmanbw@msn.com.

July 25

Edufest 2005 Counselor & Psychologists' Institute. 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., Boise State University Student Union Building, Boise. For information, contact Maxine Klossner at (208) 332-6913.

July 24-29

Edufest 2005. 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. Boise State University, Boise. For information contact Maxine at (208) 332-6913.

AUGUST

Aug. 1-5

Idaho Math Academy, (Geometry and Measurement: Standards, Assessment, Manipulative, Technology), Boise. For information contact Susan Harrington of the State Department of Education at 1 (208) 332-6932, email: sharring@sde.state.id.us, or visit: www.sde.state.id.us/instruct/math/

Aug. 4

Annual Superintendents Meeting with the State Department of Education. For information contact Susanne Daniels 1 (208) 332-6810.

Aug. 5

Orientation Meeting for New Superintendents with the State Department of Education, Boise. For information contact Susanne Daniels 1 (208) 332-6815.

Aug. 11-12

State Board of Education Meeting, Coeur d'Alene. More information is available at: <http://www.boardofed.idaho.gov/calendar.asp>

Aug. 17-19

"Character Education and Learn and Serve Idaho Conference," DoubleTree Riverside, Boise. For information contact: dgrant@sde.state.id.us or call 1 (208) 332-6974.

OCTOBER

Oct. 6-7

In-service days.

Idaho Council for Exception Children Annual State Conference, Sun Valley. Theme: "The Heart and Soul of Teaching." For information contact Sherrie Bosserman at 1 (208) 344-1761, email: sbosserman@homeinternet.net

Idaho Council of Teachers of Mathematics 2005 Fall Conference, Moscow. For information contact David A. Thomas, University of Idaho, 1 (208) 885-6740 email: dthomas1@uidaho.edu, or visit www.sci.uidaho.edu/ictm/announcements.htm

Idaho Indian Education Summit, Coeur d'Alene Casino/Hotel, Worley. For information contact Dr. Chris Meyer, principal, or Bob Sobotta, superintendent of Coeur d'Alene Tribal School, at 1 (208) 686- 5808.

"When Worlds Collide: Worlds Together, Worlds Apart," history and social sciences conference, Boise. For more information contact Linda Barker at 1(208) 287-2171 or email: Linda.Barker@Boiseschools.org

Oct. 13-14

State Board of Education meeting, Lewis-Clark State College. More information is available at: <http://www.boardofed.idaho.gov/calendar.asp>

Oct. 20-21

Idaho Council International Reading Association's 2005 Fall Conference, Coeur d'Alene Inn. Theme: "Celebrating the Pathways to Literacy." For information contact: Nancy Larsen at 1 (208) 765-2010 or nlarsen@sd271.k12.id.us

Testing dates for 2005-06

Idaho Reading Indicator – September 2005, January 2006, and from April 15 to May 15, 2006

Idaho Standards Achievement Test - Fall: Sept. 19 - Oct. 28, 2005; Spring: April 17 - May 19, 2006

Direct Mathematics Assessment – Tuesday, Nov. 29, 2005

Direct Writing Assessment - Wednesday, Nov. 30, 2005

Curricular Materials Review

Oct. 13, University Inn, Moscow
Oct. 25, Nampa Civic Center, Nampa
Oct. 26, Red Lion Hotel-Canyon Springs, Twin Falls
Oct. 27, Shilo Inn, Idaho Falls

What's next

A request for proposals for Idaho's new assessment was released in April. Wendy Verity of the Office of the State Board of Education said the goal is to have a vendor selected and work started by mid-June.

Verity said. "It doesn't mean they're dumb. It doesn't mean they can't take tests. They just don't speak the language."

But the state has a plan. Idaho started working with 10 other states several years ago to develop a single, statewide assessment for limited English proficient (LEP) students. Verity said the test is required by No Child Left Behind.

In the past, local school districts have used a variety of

measures to test achievement among LEP students.

Farris said a single test will improve consistency from school to school.

"How do we know that Boise's level gains equal those of Nampa?" Farris asked. "Right now, we're all using different tests, so it's impossible to compare district to district."

Verity said an additional problem has been that many of the tests in use across the state

assess English ability. But they often don't consider content knowledge. It's possible that LEP students are growing in math, science and reading. In many cases, however, there is no way to know.

"What the federal government is requiring us to do is to blend it all," Verity said.

"You have to learn English, but you have to learn content at the same time."

Farris said this will be the first time in Idaho's history that LEP assessments will be aligned to state standards, adding that this will help classroom teachers make specific diagnoses regarding what instruction each student needs.